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THE UNION

OF

TASTE AND SCIENCE

A POEM:

TO WHICH ARE SUBJOINED A FEW ELUCIDATING NOTES

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QUEBEC

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THE

UNION of TASTE and SCIENCE.

WHEN Nature first at Heaven's almighty word
Smiling from chaos sprang, with sweet accord
Through every nerve a secret influence stole,
And Genius triumph'd o'er her inmost soul.
From her, untortur'd by maternal throes,
Their eldest-born immortal SCIENCE rose.
Propitious horoscopes announc'd his birth,
And gratulation rang through all the earth.

Cradled in forests, rocking tempests soothe
The wild ambition of his earliest youth.
His eyes pursue the planets as they roll,
Or with the lightening dart from pole to pole.
As riper years confer more vigorous power
His busy thoughts to loftiest darings tower,

And while almighty wisdom he adores,
The vaſt out-stretch'd creation he explores,
Through all the elements adventurous goes,
Though Air, Sea, Earth, and Fire his search oppose.

Now with the juvenile whim of gallant skill,
(Yet bent ſome useful purpose to fulfill,)
Sportive the carrier-pigeon's neck he strides,
And cleaves with rapid wing th'äerial tides,
From Bagdadt to Aleppo speeds the scroll
That fans the passions, or informs the soul.
Or, with Montgolfier dares cœlestial height,
And emulates Elijah's fiery flight,
Sees cities dwindle, mightiest states grow ſmall,
And spies in miniature the whole terrestrial ball.

Now, with less bold, yet more ennobling plans,
The telegraphs of naval tactics scans,
Displays the colours, that, like Iris, fly,
Or whirls commanding rockets thro' the sky;

Informs the mighty soul of gallant Howe,
'Till Glory rides on his victorious prow;
Jarvis inspires, while with address divine
He breaks and triumphs o'er th'Iberian line;
With all the magnanimity of Duncan blends;
And succour to heroic Nelson lends.

Aye! let vain France, despoil'd of every flag,
Still Babel schemes, still impious cunning brag,
Still foully hug the meretricious art
That blinds the judgment, and pollutes the heart,
While Britain's guardian Genius towers sublime,
And walks with SCIENCE in the starry clime.

Now, with the dread Monsoon fee SCIENCE sweep,
O'er the tempestuous bosom of the deep;
Now lightly skim the phosphorescent waves,
And now plunge down to Ocean's darkest caves.
Condemn'd Leviathan starts in despair,
While prison'd pearls burst forth to gem his hair,

As from Heràclea he the the magnet tears,
And the rich gift to favour'd Florio bears.

Full of stupendous projects, SCIENCE goes
Fearless o'er Arab's sands, o'er Zembla's snows;
Surprises Nature in her loneliest haunts,
And a gay requiem over Ignorance chaunts,
Now with Linnæus treads th'ennamell'd meads,
Where wily Love botanic sageness leads.
And lo! each vegetable breast suspires,
Breathing in odorous plaints Idalian fires;
The genial magic steals from flower to flower,
And SCIENCE smiles at Love's transcendent power.

Now with severer brow, and piercing ken,
He storms the tangled brake, the cavern'd den;
Scaffolds the elephant's enormous sides,
'Till caftles move as warrior Wisdom guides.
Anon, of lonely contemplation fond,
Surveys the fabrics of the beaver pond;

Or Nature's policy delights to see
In the well ordered kingdom of the bee.

There no licentious demagogues declaim,
(For self and social intereſt are the same,)
No forc'd equality insults the laws
Of various worth and rank that Nature draws;
In every breast a love of order glows,
The bond of patriots, and the scourge of foes;
Though rich industrious, though loyal free,
And such, O Britain! as thou still may'st be.

Nor clogg'd by earth, nor bounded by the skies,
Undaunted SCIENCE raging fire defies:
The burst volcano to the crater mounts,
And springs refresh'd from Hecla's boiling founts.
When lurid lightenings spread dismay around,
And thunder rolls the death-denouncing sound,
He calmly views the elemental jar,
And rears the magic rod that stills the heavenly war.

With not leſs eaſe he wields terrestrial rays,
Conſtructs the furnace, and confines the blaze,
Flings to the furious blaſt the shapeleſs ore,
And strait redeems the bright metallic store:
The sordid world admire the glittering prize,
And gaze on SCIENCE with converted eyes.
So, when the captive Israelites, consign'd
To bigot flames, appear'd unhurt, refin'd;
Their radiant forms beſpoke their mighty Lord,
And impious heathens trembled and ador'd.

Such was the youth whoſe meritorious prime,
(Years of proud promise and attempts sublime!)
From Honour's sacred lips drew pure acclaim,
And fill'd the trumpet of eternal Fame.

At length his praises reach'd the modest ears
Of TASTE; a lovely nymph of tender years,
Daughter of Beauty by a reverend sire,
What time declining years and milder fire

Still possess'd charms to fascinate the fair,
And Virtue sought a solace of his care.

Nurs'd in the lap of Elegance, the maid
In early childhood with the Graces play'd.
Oft twining sprigs of bay and fragrant flowers
In gay festoons, she chain'd the smiling Hours:
Delighted Fancy hover'd round her head,
And flew obsequious where the virgin led.

Yet most she mild Simplicity approv'd,
Her converse courted, and her pleasures lov'd.
With her she oft has risen at earliest dawn,
And saunter'd on the dew-bespangled lawn,
Greeting the orient Sun's inspiring beams,
That tune the groves, and animate the streams.
With her she oft has climb'd the mountain brow
To sketch new landscapes in the scene below;
For, at her bidding magic Fancy flew,
And still created as her mistress drew.

From yonder hill she par'd a shapeless hump ;
That lawn embellish'd with its tufted clump ;
Yon mouldering Priory that naked stood,
Emboss'd with ivy, and o'erhung with wood ;
There thro' a lazy streamlet's oozy bed
The lively current in meanders led ;
Swell'd the light convex of that bordering height,
Yet gave the distant scenery to our sight.

But not by rural forms was TASTE engross'd ;
Each imitative Art her aid could boast.
She govern'd Angelo's impetuous soul,
And raptur'd Raphael own'd her soft controul,
Seductive Titian's glowing colours live
With all the vivid charms her soul could give.

When mighty Handel's comprehensive mind
Each congruous element of sound combin'd,
Exalted TASTE rehears'd the choral lays,
And peal'd with Angels the Messiah's praise.

Yet oft she lov'd to seek the secret haunts
Where the mild anchorite his vesper chaunts;
Or list, as in the faintly-floating wind
Romantic Melody with sorrow pin'd.
In love-lorn grief did Philomela plain;
Recording all the sadly pleasing strain,
At evening to the Leasowes she repair'd,
And sooth'd her Shenstone, as his woes she shar'd.
Hark! how as thrills the sweet Storace's note
Responsive warblings in the æther float!
Soft Zephyrs waft them to the distant waste,
And wondering Wildness owns the power of TASTE.

But now, (as Fate ordains that heavenly Love
Shall every heaven-descended spirit move,)
Her tender breast dilates with new desire,
And the pure flame is sanction'd by her sire;
For lo! commission'd from th'empyreal sky
Young SCIENCE beams all-glorious to her eye,
As achromatic Truth his form displays
In the bright focus of cœlestial rays.

The nymph enamour'd smiles him to her arms,
And SCIENCE pants entrammell'd by her charms.

Abrupt---the clangor of impetuous war
Rouses his soul some God-like deed to dare;
He flies the scenes where Love and Pleasure smile,
And hurls Britannia's thunder o'er the Nile.
The potent spell strikes impious Folly dead:
Wisdom awakes from her primæval bed,
And hails the valiant chief by sacred SCIENCE led.

But who can tell how gentle TASTE deplor'd
The fate that sever'd all her soul ador'd!
For oft, though many a fond and pleasing art
Play'd 'round her fancy, none e'er touch'd her heart:
Like the smooth ice reflecting lunar rays,
Her breast was cold amid the glittering blaze;
But when the fervid sun of SCIENCE shone,
He swell'd her bosom, and unloos'd her zone.

From court to court she flew with anxious haste,
And the gay footsteps of her childhood trac'd;
The solemn pile, the gay arcade explor'd,
The polish'd drawing-room, the festive board:
Now, all seem'd pompous pride, or gaudy glare,
Or flippant folly, or voluptuous snare.
When Memory, (to grief as kind as dear,)
Whispers reviving counsel in her ear,
And proudly points to the sequester'd scene
Where Canada enjoys her lov'd Vice-Queen.
"Ah! there," with transport, "there," exclaims the maid,
" How oft with PRESCOTT have I fondly stray'd;
" Caught from her lips the precepts that refin'd,
" And stamp'd a value on my opening mind;
" There from the wife, the mother, and the friend,
" Learn'd Elegance and Love with Dignity to blend!"
Then bright and rapid as the nothern-light,
Across the vast atlantic sped her flight.
The skiff Velella crowded every sail
To catch the convoy and enjoy the gale;

The pilot Phäeton stooping flew before ;
And fluttering Halcyon hail'd her from the shore.
Dione 'spied her 'mid the joyous groupe,
And flew to launch her elegant chaloupe,
That matchless conch in which young Venus lay
When first she sprang from the Ægean spray.
Scarce the light form of TASTE the barque had press'd,
When in the Chateau shone the much lov'd guest.

Here, as invisible to vulgar eyes
From room to room with rapid glance she flies,
Amaz'd she sees, while rapture thrills her breast,
The genuine soul of SCIENCE stand confest.

The veteran warrior, o'er whose laurel'd brow
The olive loves to shoot its foliage now,
Had rais'd the veil that hangs o'er future years,
Where SCIENCE fostering Public-Weal appears ;
Then with his Consort lent a willing hand
To honour TASTE and SCIENCE through the land.

Plain, proud encomium! worthy those to share
Who make a people's happiness their care!
For not to arid land more vigour brings
The confluent bounty of redundant springs,
Not to the lingering germs that frost conceals
Breathe more auspicious spring's etesian gales,
Than TASTE and SCIENCE o'er th'untutor'd mind
Shed the best benefits of human-kind.

And lo! the grateful ministers prepare
Whatever exquiste, whatever rare
The tributary elements supply
From vasty ocean, from encircling sky,
From teeming earth, or from transmuting fire
The sage solicits and the world admire.
The curious ark, by labouring SCIENCE fill'd,
Enamour'd TASTE delights with charms to gild.

There in their native garb obscurely shine
The rugged treasures of the unwrought mine:

Like the first natives of our hardy climes
Who scorn'd the polish of refining times.
Here, where the sun descends in mid-day blaze,
Prismatic crystals put to rout his rays;
The scatter'd host, as in bright troops they fly,
Arrest, and dazzle, and enchant the eye.
Ah! were to it alone the power confin'd!
Did the gay brilliant ne'er sednce the mind,
Then e'en on earth had Virtue founded thrones
On the bright pediment of precious stones.
As, yet, when worldly time shall pass away,
And sun and moon be lost in endless day,
A wondrous city shall the blest infold,
Its walls of jasper, and its streets of gold,
Its bright foundations evermore to last
With ruby, sapphire, and sardonyx grac'd,
While every gem through the sublime abode
Shall multiply the glorious light of God.

But 'till the soul fling off this nymphal coil
And rise transform'd, like Psyche, from the soil,

Let humble Prudence from Temptation run,
And even the extremes of Virtue shun.
This sage advice, that suits Religion best,
Has modest TASTE by emblem here express'd.
For though no diamond glitter from afar,
Yet not excluded is the ponderous spar,
Magnesian daze, calcareous stalactite,
Or mild Argilla's boasted zeolite.
Here from the causeway fabled giants rear'd
The proud Basalt his tribute has preferr'd;
And wild Niagara her foam return'd,
Like weeping Niobe to stone transform'd.

But say, what trophies from the vast profound
With various magic raviſh or astound?
The scor'd volute, Amphion's favourite shell;
The virgin Bulla, Thetis lov'd so well;
The coral house, where polypes yet adhere;
The leopard-cowry, to the Gnidians dear:

And justly dear, who Periander wreck'd
When the proud foe their liberties attack'd.

With these contrasted, how we smile to see
The cataphracted fish in panoply;
Or the huge Echinus, whose hedge-hog spines
Must choak the whale who on such dainties dines;
Or, as sly Humour points, in separate niche,
The wise-saw'd owl whom budding horns enrich,
While the dumb marble boasts the bacon-flitch!

But vain th' inadequate description, vain
The skimming comment of the Muse's strain.
How can she body forth her rainbow words
To paint the living colours of the birds?
How conjure up each floweret to the eye
Its form delineate, and revive its dye?
How, most of all, the witching Grace convene
That breathes a matchless magic o'er the scene
Where mingling Pleasure and Inſtruction lurk,
While TASTE and SCIENCE own it as their work?

By Virtue favour'd, as by Wisdom plann'd,
Long may the honour'd union bleſs the land
Of TASTE and SCIENCE! wide may they impart
The influence that refines and cheers the heart,
Yet nerves the soul t'establish as to feel
The public glory, and the public weal!
And long may Canada exulting own
PRESCOTTS reflecting lustre to the throne.

NOTES.

FROM the nature of the foregoing poëm, some allusions necessarily arose which may not be generally obvious. To elucidate these the author has subjoined a few notes, for which if he should receive the slightest thanks from any of his fair readers, he will be amply satisfied. The learned philosopher, for whom they are not intended, should pass them by without spleen, as he does the toy-shop, or the perfume warehouse.

Line 21—*Carrier-Pigeons.*] These pigeons used to arrive at Aleppo with expresses from Bagdadt, or from Babylon, (30 days journey,) in 48 hours. Within these few years past, this rapid post has been broken up; the Curds having learned to rob the mail, and kill the couriers.

L. 25.—*Montgolfier.*] The balloon of Montgolfier, (the first mere mortal who explored the skies,) was elevated by fire. Since his time balloons have been generally constructed with inflammable air, which is about twelve times lighter than an equal bulk of the atmosphere.

L. 31.—*Iris.*] The rainbow; the messenger of the Gods, and generally employed on hostile occasions.

L. 47.—*Phosphorescent.*] The beautiful and astonishing brightness which the agitated ocean sometimes exhibits is known to derive its origin from the phosphoric light of myriads of minute animals who inhabit its waves.

L. 51—*Heraclea* } The magnet is said to have been first discovered at Heràclea, a celebrated
L. 52—*Flavio.* } sea-port of the ancient Lydia; and hence it has been sometimes called the Heraclean Stone. Its application to the compass is usually ascribed to Flavio da Molsi, a Neapolitan; in memory of whom the territory of Principato, that boasts the honour of having given him birth, quarters a compass in its arms.

L. 62.—*Science smiles.*] Every one knows that "the Loves of the Plants," as gravely expounded by Linnæus, constitute the foundation of modern botany; and under this title Dr. Darwin has favoured the world with an elegant, philosophic poem. All this is very imposing, nay fascinating; still however Science does smile.

L. 70.—*Kingdom of the Bee.*] Those modern philosophers who so sagely tell us that monarchy is a state of society not conformable to nature, have unluckily, (I suppose,) never had the opportunity of peeping into a bee-hive.

L. 86.—*Magic rod.*] The electrical conductor silently disarms the thunder-cloud.

L. 159.—*Achromatic.*] The achromatic glass, (familiar to astronomers,) corrects the false colours, or aberration of light occasioned by others.

L. 196.—*The skiff Velella.*] This elegant and curious little animal, (a species of Medusa,) has an oval, light-blue body, from the lower part of which, on each side, issue a number of

ſmall proceſſes, like oars: From the upper part ariſes obliquely a tranſparent membrane that reſembles, and actually ſerves as a ſail. Thus equipped it is frequantly ſeen cruiſing on the atlantic ocean.

L. 198.—*The pilot Phaëton.*] Phaëton æthereus, ſo called from the prodigious height to which it ſoars, is ſtyled in engliſh, the tropic-bird, from its being moſtly ſeen within the tropic circles. Upon ſome extraordinary occaſions, however, this bird has gone beyond its usual limits. Thus, to Kalm, when ſailing under the auſpices of SCIENCE to Canada, it presented itself on the atlantic in 40°. north latitude. Thus also Latham mentions one having been ſeen on the ſame ocean in 47½° north latitude; and this was probably the very pilot here commemorated. The appearance of this bird indicates to ſailors that land is at no great diſtance.

L. 199. *Halcyon.*] The king-fiſher, a beautiful and brilliant bird, tho' of a retired diſpoſition, and chiefly haunting the banks of rivers, is ſuppoſed to be the true halcyon of the ancients, proverbially the type of happy days.

L. 200. *Dione.*] Venus Dione, ſo called after the ſuppoſed mother of Venus, is a native of the american ſeas. This exquiſite bivalve, moored in the Chateau by the hand of TASTE, ſtill experiences the ſhelter of its hoſpitable roof. The curioſity of ſuch as have not ſeen it may probably be inflamed by the following encomium of the celebrated naturaliſt Dr. Shaw.—" This rare and curious ſhell is numbered amongſt the moſt valuable articles " of the conchyliological cabinet; and is indeed conſidered, when in its complete and un- " blemiſhed ſtate, as one of the cimelia of modern muſeums."

L. 224—*As, yet,*] This alludes to a wonderfully ſplendid and ſublime deſcription by St. John, Rev. xxi.—

L. 252—*Nymphæ coil.*] The greek Pſyche originally ſignified a butterfly. The ancients, obſerving the ſurpriſing tranſformation of this inſect from its coiled and torpid ſtate of nymph or chryſalis to that of a bright aërial being which ſoon vaniſhed from their ſight, employed the ſame name metaphorically to denote the ſoul. The general idea was figured, according to the principles of their mythology, under the repreſentation of a beautiful young female, from whoſe ſhoulders iſſued the wings of the butterfly; and of whom they feigned that Cupid, who ſwayed all the reſt of the world, was himſelf enamoured.

L. 258—*Diamond.*] Of the five principal kinds of earth, the diamond and almoſt all the precious ſtones belong to the ſiliceous tribe.

L. 259—*Ponderous ſpar.*] Cluſters of regularly figured ſpars of the barytic order.

L. 260—*Magneſian daze.*] The tranſparent muſcovy or pure mica, one of the moſt elegant forms under which the magneſian earth preſents itſelf.

L. 260—*Calcareous ſtalactite.*] The ſtone icicle, or drop-ſtone.

NOTES.

L. 261—*Argillas boasted zeolite.*] The azure stone, or lapis lazuli. This beautiful mineral is compoſed principally of argillaceous earth, with ſome ſilver and iron.

L. 262—*The cauſeway fabled giants rear'd.*] The celebrated baſaltic columns in the north of Ireland, the nobleſt productions of this kind in the world, are commonly called the giant's cauſeway.

268—*The ſcor'd volute.*] It requires but little aid from Fancy to diſcover the muſical notes on this nice little marine rarity. The ſhells generally called volutes, Linnæus has diſtinguiſed by the title conus or cone.

L. 269.—*The virgin Bulla.*] This marine production (called alſo buccinum virgineum by Linnæus) diſtinguiſhed by parti-coloured, double bands, and its purple, truncated column, is conſidered as one of the moſt elegant of the ſingle-valved, convoluted ſhells.

L. 270.—*The coral houſe.*] It is now eſtabliſhed that the various ſpecies of corals owe their exiſtence to certain marine animals termed polypes, by whom they are inhabited.

L. 271.—*The leopard-cowry.*] The cypræa tigris of Linnæus is alſo called cypræa pardalis or leopard cowry, from the dark-brown ſpots with which it is ſo ſtrikingly diverſified. Though not uncommon it is extremely handſome, and derives from nature its ſingularly high poliſh. It was formerly honoured with the title of Venus's ſhell, for the ſtory ran that the tyrant Periander having attacked her favoured votaries in the iſle of Gnidos, Venus iſſued her commands to theſe truſty agents, who aſſembled in conſiderable numbers, and wrecked his veſſel.

L. 275.—*Cataphracted fiſh.*] So called by Ichthyologiſts, from its being clad in a complete coat of mail, which this truly hard word implies.

L. 276.—*Echinus.*] The ſea-urchin: that here alluded to is uncommonly large, and formidable.

L. 280.—*Marble beaſts the bacon-flitch.*] This alludes to a ſpecimen which bears a whimſical reſemblance to that far-fam'd prize of conjugal good-humour.

L. 282.—*The ſkimming comment of the Muſe's ſtrain.*] Superficially indeed has ſhe touched upon a few, a very few of the curious and valuable articles of this elegant cabinet, which adorns, like a wreath of amaranth, the rugged brow of the gigantic rock of Quebec.